

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL MONTERREY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3727

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN EAGR MX

SUBJECT: AGRARIAN REFORM

1. MONTERREY WILL HOST A CONFERENCE ON AGRARIAN REFORM ON JUNE 8-9, ACCORDING TO EXECUTIVE PRESENT AT THE CONSUL GENERAL'S LATEST BUSINESSMEN'S ROUNDTABLE. PARTICIPANTS IN CONFERENCE WILL INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES FROM GOM CABINET,IBRD, FAO, LABOR LEADERS OF CAMPESINO MOVEMENTS, REPRESENTATIVES OF BUSINESS MEN'S GROUPS SUCH AS CENTRO PATRONAL, AND UNION SOCIAL DE EMPRESARIOS MEXICANOS WHICH IS ORGANIZING EVENT. INVITATION HAS ALSO BEEN SENT TO LABOR ATTACHE NIXON OF EMBASSY AIM OF MEETING , WHICH HAS, OF COURSE, PRESIDENTIAL BLESSING, WILL BE TO CONCENTRATE ATTENTION ON STATE OF RURAL SECTOR. LOPEZ-PORTILLO, HE EXPLAINED, HAS CONFIDED HIS EXPRESS INTENTION TO MAKE CHANGES IN THE RURAL SECTOR. CONFERENCE EXPECTED TO DWELL ON FAILURE OF EJIDO SYSTEM, DISCUSS POSESIONARIOS, DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS, COOPERATIVES, AND THE INEFFICIENCY OF MEXICO'S BANRURAL.

2. THIS EXECUTIVE ALSO EXPRESSED CMNCERN TYAT ANY REALLY EFFECTIVE BOOST IN PER CAPITA AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT COULD ENHANCE MEXICO'S SOCIAL PROBLEMS. HE REASONED THAT MECHANIZATION COULD CUT DEMAND FOR LABOR IN THE TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL

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PAGE 02 MONTER 00371 232021Z

SECTOR AND THUS ACCELERATE THE FLUX OF CAMPESINOS TO URBAN AREAS. A GO-SLOW POLICY WAS HENCE IN ORDER.

3. ANOTHER EXECUTIVE NOTED THAT ANY REALLY RADICAL SHIFT IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY WAS UNLIKELY SINCE IT WOULD RUN COUNTER TO THE TIME-HALLOWED COLLECTIVIST THRUST OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION. SUCH A SHIFT WOULD REQUIRE

THE RIGHT ATMOSPHERE AND A VERY STRONG PRESIDENT. HE EXPLAINED THAT A FORMAL GOM COMMITMENT TO STOP SPLITTING LAND HOLDINGS IN THE NAME LAND REFORM WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARD BOOSTING CONFIDENCE AND OUTPUT BY NON-COLLECTIVIZED FARMING UNITS. HE ALSO NOTED POSSIBILITY THAT SOME MECHANISM MIGHT BE FOUND WHEREBY WHOLE-SALERS OF FOODSTUFFS COULD ARRIVE AT CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH CAMPESINOS, JUST AS IN THE CURRENT CASE OF MELON PRODUCTION IN WHICH PRIVATE CAPITAL IS PROVIDED IN THE FORM OF SEED AND FINANCING IN EXCHANGE FOR ASSURED SUPPLY.

4. COMMENT: WHETHER THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION, WHICH HAS ALREADY SHIFTED NATIONAL POLICY AWAY FROM THE LEFT, WANTS TO SIEZE THE NETTLE OF REFORMING AGRARIAN POLICY REMAINS TO BE SEEN. CONFERENCES --PARTICULARLY THOSE HOSTED BY THE HOME OF REGIONMONTANO PLUTOCRATS-- ARE NOT THE VEHICLE WITH WHICH THE GOM-PRI NORMALLY RESOLVES ISSUES. MUDD

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